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No. 12

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

January 19, 2022.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 10, 2022, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### AMERICA'S LUMBER CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. HERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HERN. Madam Speaker, over the last 2 years, the price of lumber rose at an astronomical rate. This followed prolonged shutdowns of lumber mills and production plants, despite the maintained demand for lumber for construction projects that continued as an essential activity during the pandemic. The resulting supply and demand inversion caused a nationwide lumber shortage.

Our economy struggles when businesses feel uncertainty in the market, which is why it is the government's job, in times of crisis like the COVID pandemic, to ensure stability.

In May of last year, I sent a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai urging action to prevent further disruption in the price of lumber. At the time I sent the letter, lumber prices had skyrocketed more than 300 percent over the previous year. With the support of nearly 100 bipartisan Members of Congress, Congressman BRIAN HIGGINS and I asked Ambassador Tai to resolve the crisis by resuming trade negotiations with Canada to reduce the price of softwood lumber.

While lumber prices temporarily declined following that letter, it took months for a meaningful portion of those decreases to reach the construction industry and its customers. Prices began rising again in September and have continued to increase in the months since, once again putting strain on the hardworking Americans who build our homes and communities.

In December, I once again joined Congressman HIGGINS and nearly 100 bipartisan Members of Congress to send a second letter to the Biden administration, this time to Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, voicing concerns over the Department of Commerce's decision to increase antidumping and countervailing duties on softwood lumber products from Canada. We are concerned that this will further exacerbate the lumber crisis.

The housing sector remains an integral piece of the U.S. economy. As we continue to recover from the COVID pandemic, sharp increases in the price of lumber will further harm our recovery and the costs faced by hardworking Americans.

It is our understanding that the U.S. and Canada discussed this very issue last year and expressed mutual interest in resolving the problem, but it is un-

clear if any action has yet been taken by either country.

We want to see stability and normalcy restored to the housing market. It is imperative that we do so. We want to see definitive action from the Biden administration to solve this problem.

Madam Speaker, we in Congress stand ready to help in any way we can.

### ABOLISH FILIBUSTER OR LET DEMOCRACY DIE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, as we come off the historic Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, it is incumbent upon all of us not just to reflect on his legacy but to really honor it.

Honoring his legacy means really using our political strength, much of which was given to us by him and his struggle, to deliver the very voting rights protections he and countless other civil rights leaders, including our very own John Lewis, bled to secure.

We simply cannot accept empty promises anymore, Madam Speaker, in pursuit of his dream for a more equal and just America, not from Senators who have the power to live fully in those ideals today and not from Members of this very Chamber.

How can anyone, Madam Speaker, especially any Member of the Senate, celebrate this day of service, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, without standing for democracy and the rights of others?

How can they, in good faith, deliver empty words or celebrate his legacy in the shadow of this current attack on access to the ballot box when they themselves have the power to stop it?

But let me step back just a minute and put this in perspective, Madam Speaker. Just last year, Republicans introduced 440 voter suppression bills

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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